

IHSS GAZETTE

Placer County IHSS Advisory Committee Newsletter

A Message from the Public Authority Manager

As you will see, in this edition of The IHSS Gazette, there are articles on how to protect against identity theft and information on the West Nile Virus. In keeping with this theme of protection and safety, it seems appropriate to mention one of the outcomes of In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) – helping to keep IHSS consumers safe and independent in their homes. Remaining safe and secure in their homes is a primary goal of most IHSS consumers. The IHSS Advisory Committee and the IHSS Public Authority believe that the consumer has a right to remain in their home, and has a right to feel safe and secure in that home. IHSS, the IHSS Advisory Committee and the IHSS Public Authority will continue to do all we can to assist consumers in remaining safe and secure in their homes.

We Have A Winner!



Eldon Luce, Public Authority Manager, presents Eva Couch with gift certificates to Applebee's & Auburn Signature Theater

Eva Couch names the newsletter and wins Dinner and a Movie for two.

Congratulations Eva!

Honorable Mentions:

The Empowerment Connection-Abigail
 WC-Wise Counsel-Edna
 HOPE-Josephine
 Guardian-Ruth
 Angels Without Wings-Kenneth
 Sunshine Health-Martha
 In The Know-Mary
 Caregivers Connection-Patricia

SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL OF YOU!

YOU can still be a winner! Design a LOGO to compliment our newly named newsletter and you too could win dinner and a movie!

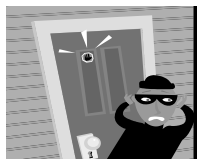


Send your entry to:

IHSS Newsletter - Logo Contest

11533 'C' Avenue, Auburn, CA 95603





Identity Theft



What Is Identity Theft?

Identity theft is when someone uses your personal information (name, Social Security number, credit card number, etc.) without your permission.

It is one of the fastest growing crimes in America. Last year 700,000 people were victims. Seniors are especially vulnerable because of their trusting nature and because they typically have more financial assets than their younger counterparts.

How Credit Identity Theft Occurs

Mail Theft: Thieves may steal envelopes containing checks, pre-approved credit card offers, convenience checks, etc. from a victim's mailbox and use the information to make purchases or obtain credit.

Dumpster Diving: Thieves search garbage cans at businesses for un-shredded paperwork containing personal identification information. They will also scrounge through residential garbage cans looking for your discarded paperwork containing personal identification or financial information.

Insider Access: Employees may steal your personal information that a business has collected for legitimate reasons. Thieves will often sell the information to a crime ring or use it to obtain credit.

Purse or Wallet Loss or Snatching: If you must carry a purse, hold it close to your body. Do not dangle it.

Internet: Personal Identification information that is available on the Internet can be

intercepted or accessed by a thief and misused to obtain credit in the victim's name.

Thieves will use the personal information they steal to apply for a driver's license, obtain credit cards and loans, and make major purchases under YOUR name.

Make It Hard For The Thief

- ♦ Order and review a copy of your credit report at least ONCE A YEAR. You are entitled to one free credit report per year, call 877-322-8228.
- ♦ Carry only the credit cards you need.
- ♦ Obtain receipts for all transactions.
- ♦ Keep personal information, such as your Social Security Number, private.
- ♦ Carefully review your bank statements and bills for discrepancies. Buy and use a paper shredder.
- ♦ Order checks with your initials and last name. The thief won't know how you sign your checks.
- ♦ Consider canceling all credit cards you have not used in the past six months.

What To Do If You Are A Victim

File a police report immediately in the jurisdiction where the items were stolen.

Call the three national credit reporting agencies immediately to place a fraud alert on your name and Social Security number.

- | | | |
|----------------|---|--------------|
| 1) Equifax | - | 800-685-1111 |
| 2) Experian | - | 888-397-3742 |
| 3) Trans Union | - | 800-680-7289 |

National Caregivers Month

November 2005

- ♦ Is your provider doing a great job?
- ♦ Would you like to say "Thank You" in a special way?

Write us a note telling us how your provider is extra special and why they should be recognized in the Winter 2005 Newsletter!

Send your note to:
IHSS Public Authority
Attn: "Caregiver's Month"
11533 'C' Avenue
Auburn, CA 95603

Just The Facts



The Social Security Administration (SSA) might need to call Medicare beneficiaries who submit an "Application for Extra Help with Prescription Drug Costs". How can you be sure the call is from the SSA and not part of a scam?

The SSA might call if questions on the application were not answered, if they cannot read the answer, or to resolve discrepancies between answers on the application and information obtained from other Federal agencies about the applicant's income or resources.

When an SSA employee calls, he/she will never ask for bank account numbers, credit card numbers or life insurance policy numbers. In most cases, they will not ask for a Social Security Number. The only time they will do so, is if the number on the application is illegible or invalid. If you receive a suspicious call from someone claiming to be a Social Security employee, hang up and call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 to confirm that the call was legitimate. www.ssa.gov



Ask Eldon



Q: Who pays for the gasoline when a provider is asked to drive a consumer?

A: The Registry Provider Handbook suggests the following:

When a service is covered by IHSS, such as a medical appointment, or when the consumer needs to be fitted for health-related equipment or special clothing, you may agree to drive. If you will be driving your own car to take the consumer to medical appointments or to do errands, work out in advance how much you will be paid by the consumer for reasonable costs for mileage, gas, and parking. IHSS does not cover these expenses.

Q: Why was there a delay in getting my timesheet?

A: Each time you go to work for a new consumer, you are required to complete a Provider Enrollment Packet. Delays occur when we do not receive ALL of the documents requested in the packet. For example, if you return the completed Provider Enrollment Agreement, the W-4 and the signed Confidentiality Statement but do not send a copy of your *valid* driver license (or picture ID) & *signed* social security card, the timesheet will be delayed until we receive them. The State of California will not allow payment until all documents are on record.

Send your questions to: IHSS Public Authority, ATTN: Ask Eldon
11533 'C' Avenue, Auburn, CA 95603



Meet Your Public Authority Staff



Public Authority Staff - Left to Right - Shirlee Herrington (Public Authority Secretary), Debbie Faia (Registry Specialist), Kathryn Ripley (Registry Specialist), Eldon Luce (Public Authority Manager), Sharon Shuba (Registry Clerk), Becky Hager (Registry Clerk) and Lin Mulrane (Registry Specialist)

The Placer County In-Home Support Services (IHSS) Public Authority maintains a registry to recruit and screen IHSS providers. Its Mission: to boost the availability and quality of IHSS services; help recipients link up with IHSS homecare workers who meet their needs; and help build positive, productive relationships between recipients and providers.

Before a provider can join the registry, they must complete a thorough application process that includes providing references that are checked and attending an orientation.

The Public Authority also offers training and support for providers and recipients; and advocates for IHSS improvements at the local, state and federal levels.

The Public Authority services are available at no cost to all IHSS providers and recipients in Placer County. Please call us anytime at 530-886-3680.

Provider Benefits

No-cost provider health benefits are available to Placer County IHSS providers who work and are **paid** for 65+ hours per month for two (2) consecutive months.

Each month we receive a report from the State of California. These reports from the State use pay periods from two (2) months to calculate monthly paid hours.

For Example: The State adds the *paid hours* from the period ending September 30th plus the *paid hours* from the period ending October 15th to deter-

mine total paid hours for the month of October. This sum must equal 65+ paid hours

Once you become eligible, we will automatically send you an insurance application in the mail.

A maximum of 400 providers can be enrolled in the health plan at any time. In August, we reached that number and were forced to start a waiting list. While on the waiting list, it is crucial that you maintain your eligibility, otherwise you will be dropped from the waiting list.

Please make sure your time-sheets are turned in

ON-TIME!

For questions about Eligibility, call Shirlee Herrington at:

530-886-3680

If you are currently enrolled in the health plan and have questions about your coverage, call Patient Advocacy at:

877-447-7435



FIGHT THE BITE



About West Nile Virus:

West Nile Virus is a disease that is transmitted to humans by mosquitoes. It has been common in Africa, West Asia and the Middle East for decades. It first appeared in the U.S. in 1999 in New York and has traveled westward quickly. West Nile Virus has been found in California.

It is rare to catch West Nile Virus and most people who get infected do not get sick or have mild to moderate symptoms. Symptoms are similar to the flu. In rare cases the disease can be fatal.

How It Is Spread:

West Nile Virus is carried long distances by infected birds and then spread locally by mosquitoes that bite these birds. Infected mosquitoes can then bite and pass the virus on to humans and animals, primarily birds and horses. There is a vaccine for horses. There is no vaccine for humans at this time. House pets do not spread the illness.

The Placer County Health Department is closely monitoring human and horse illnesses. Monitoring for the disease is being done by testing dead birds and mosquitoes. Placer County also has a sentinel flock of chickens that are tested frequently for the presence of West Nile Virus.

Risks and Symptoms:

Even in areas where the virus is circulating, very few mosquitoes are infected with the virus. Even if a mosquito is infected, less than 1% of people who get bitten and become infected will get severely ill. The chances a person will become severely ill from any one mosquito bite are extremely small. Symptoms generally appear 3 to 14 days after exposure.

All residents of areas where West Nile Virus activity has been confirmed are at risk, but people over age 50 seem to be especially vulnerable to the severe forms of disease.

West Nile virus can cause encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) and/or meningitis (inflammation of the brain's lining). However, most infections are mild to moderate and symptoms include fever, headache, body aches, and occasionally include skin rashes and swollen lymph nodes.

More severe infections may include headache, high fever, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, muscle weakness or convulsions. Persons with these symptoms need to seek medical attention immediately.

www.placer.ca.gov



You can become better informed about this disease any time, including how to protect people or horses, report potentially-infected birds, receive additional information or schedule informational presentations by calling 530-889-4001.



PLACER COUNTY
IHSS PUBLIC AUTHORITY
11533 'C' AVENUE
AUBURN, CA 95603

Placer County Public Authority

Administration:

11533 C Avenue
Auburn, CA 95603

Manager:

Eldon Luce

Registry Staff:

11512 B Avenue
Auburn, CA 95603
Phone: 530-886-3680
Fax: 530-886-3690

Secretary:

Shirlee Herrington

Registry Specialists:

Linda (Lin) Mulrane
Debbie Faia
Kathryn Ripley

Hours:

Monday - Thursday
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Friday
8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Registry Clerks:

Rebecca Hager
Sharon Shuba

United Domestic Workers (UDW)

3737 Camino Del Rio South, #400
San Diego, CA 92108
1-877-483-9937

IHSS Advisory Committee

Margaret Maldaner - Chairperson

Michael Fletcher - Vice Chairperson

- ♦ Deborah Dahl
- ♦ Mary DeGraaf
- ♦ Ruth Lindsley
- ♦ Katie Snoberger

JOIN TODAY!

CALL 530-886-3680